Vancouver metro

Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2016

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HOUSE OF CARDS

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Resort community looks to crack down on Airbnb

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Ruling details B.C. teacher's sexual behaviour

ALLEGATIONS

Panel finds Hankey guilty of professional misconduct

An elementary school teacher in British Columbia repeatedly sneaked into his school for late-night phone calls to sex-chat lines and used a colleague's work laptop over a winter break to access explicit websites and download pornography, a disciplinary panel has found.

In a decision published on the province's Education Ministry website, the three-person panel found former Grade 4-5 teacher Darren Hankey guilty of professional misconduct related to behaviour that took place in the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows school district between 2010 and 2013.

"Most of the allegations dealt with in this proceeding raise issues of dishonesty as a result of (Hankey's) desire to hide his inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature utilizing school property and his lack of due diligence in record keeping," read the document.

"His conduct undermines the credibility of the profession."

In its 21-page ruling, the panel references evidence from the consultant's interviews that Hankey admitted to the allegations, which include forging the school principal's signature on report cards and claiming sick leave on four occasions to attend court hearings on an unrelated domestic abuse charge.

Hankey faced seven allegations, all of which the panel ruled were "proved," and all except one amounted to professional misconduct. The exception was the accusation that he failed to properly complete and file student report cards. The document concluded Hankey took a fellow teacher's computer without her knowledge and used it during the 2012 winter break to access Internet pages with explicit content, including websites that connect "swingers" for sexual purposes.

He also entered the school after hours on 35 occasions and made sexual phone calls, in some cases using the school phone, read the decision.

The panel accepted the allegation that Hankey stored about 200 explicit sexual images of himself and others on his work laptop and, when ordered to return the device, lied to both the school district and police that the computer had been stolen from his car during a trip to a Washington state casino.

The decision described the sexual pictures as "mixed in with photos of (Hankey's) family, legal documents and report cards for students." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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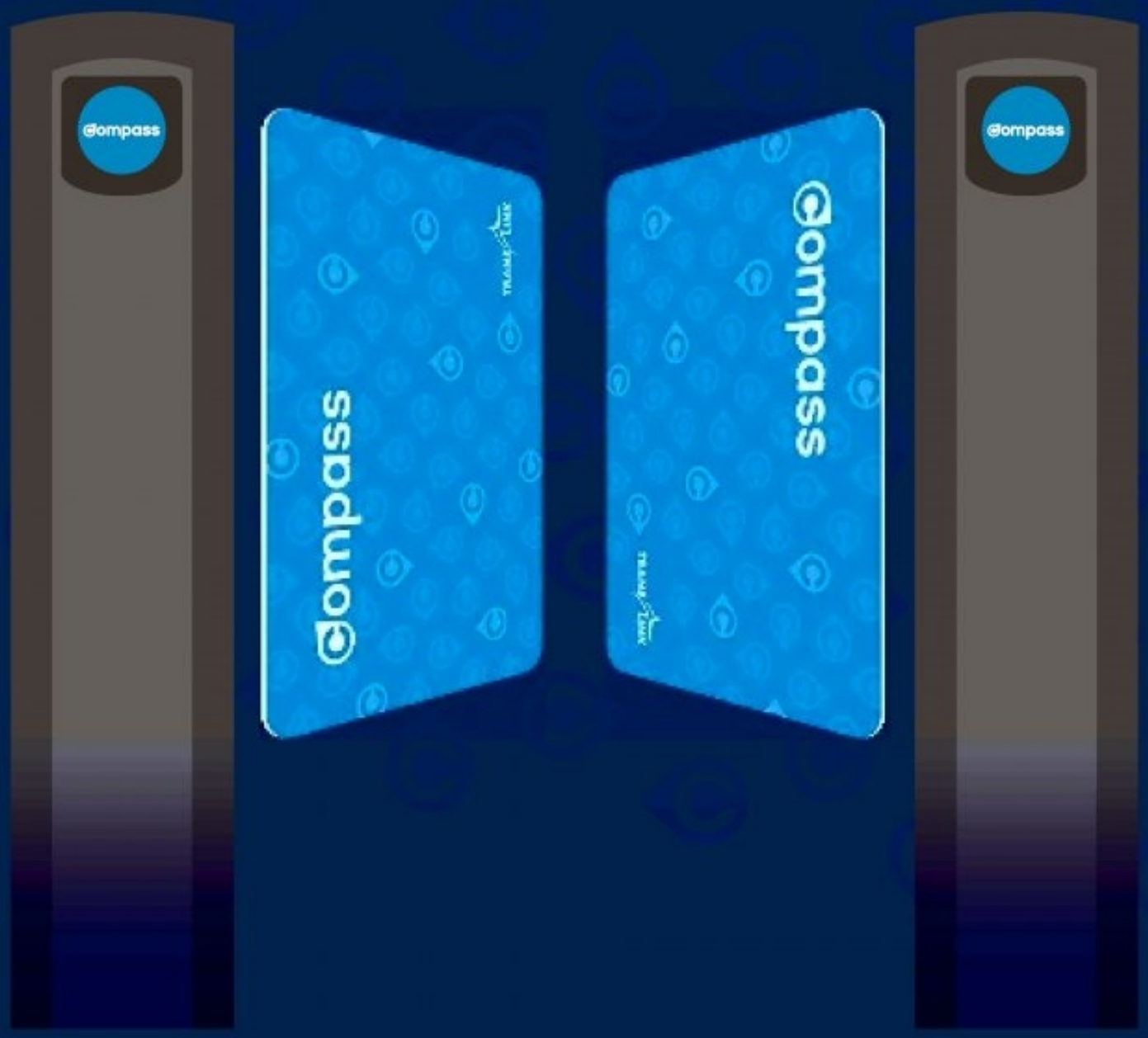

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Puppy's killer to be destroyed

COURTS

Judge orders pit bull put down, but legal battle goes on

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

A pit bull responsible for killing a puppy in Yaletown last year has been ordered destroyed.

A B.C. provincial court judge ordered the destruction last Thursday, nine months after the four-year-old male American bulldog-mastiff cross killed the puppy in the June 14 attack.

But Antonella Moscone, who witnessed the mauling of her sister's five-month-old cocker spaniel Mila, says she still can't believe how long and painful the process has been waiting for the pit bull to be put down.

"It just blows my mind what it takes to have one horribly vicious dog put down and the amount of taxpayers' dollars that are going to this," Moscone told Metro.

"There were eight witnesses, two animal control officers, one animal behaviourist and eight hours in court for one dog. It was insane."

While she is pleased with the outcome, she said the memory of the brutal mauling still haunts her.

That Sunday afternoon, Moscone, her sister Lucy DeVita and a friend were walking down Homer Street near Smithe Street with puppy Mila when the pit bull, which was unleashed and unmuzzled, ran toward them and lunged.

The three women, along with witnesses, tried to pull the pit bull off Mila, also suffering defensive wounds in the process, but were unsuccessful. It was only when the dog's owner arrived a few moments later that he was eventually able to get the dog to let go.

Despite undergoing emergency veterinary surgery, the puppy died of her injuries.

In December, Moscone and DeVita filed a separate civil lawsuit against the city of Vancouver, the dog's owners, and the strata council where the owners lived, for allegedly failing to properly control the pit bull.

The case is still before the courts.

But nearly a year later, Moscone said she is still struggling with emotional distress, which she said has been exacerbated by the lengthy legal process.

Mila CONTRIBUTED

Antonella Moscone, left, with Lucy DeVita after DeVita's puppy was killed. THANDI FLETCHER/METRO FILE

"The days leading up to going to court, I wasn't sleeping just going through it all again," she said. "It's horrific that the law is always on the side of the perpetrators and not the victims."

John Gray, assistant manager for animal services, confirmed he was notified Thursday that a court order for the dog to be euthanized had been passed.

> **"It just blows my mind what it takes to have one horribly vicious dog put down.**
> Antonella Moscone

While the dog, which has in custody of Vancouver Animal Services since the attack, has not yet been euthanized, "there are arrangements for it to happen," he said.

Asked why the process took so long, Gray said it's "not unheard of for court cases to take nine months or longer."

He noted that the city also ensures aggressive dogs remain in animal services' custody during that time to prevent future attacks.

"We take it seriously so that, when we do actually have an opportunity to assess the dog and build a case, if we feel after we've done the assessment that that dog can't be put back into society, we will hold the dog until the court date happens," he said.

Despite everything the dog has done to her family, however, Moscone said she still "feels horrible" that the animal has had to stay at the pound for nine months.

"It shouldn't have," she said. "I just wish there was a different process that would put this stuff through quicker."

"There is a huge demand for Recreation Professionals, particularly working with seniors."

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION (GERONTOLOGY)

Older adults are the fastest growing age group in Canada, resulting in a growing employment need for professionals who can support and promote optimal health for this generation. The field of therapeutic recreation, especially for older adults (gerontology), is not just limited to physical exercise but activities that promote healthy living including: arts, crafts, music, gardening, games, social events, outings and entertainment. The promotion of health in older adults encompasses physical, social, emotional, cultural, spiritual and mental well-being. Average starting wage is $21+ / hour.

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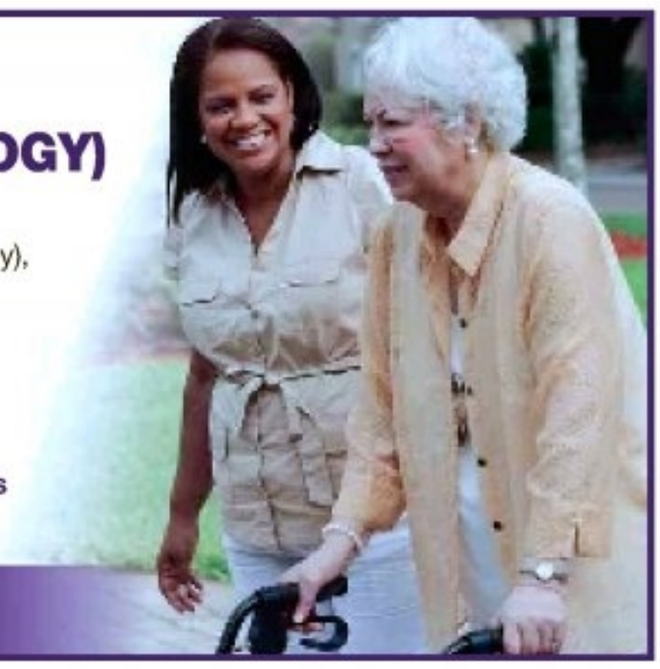

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Tofino cracks down on Airbnb

TOURISM

Unlicensed home rentals leading to higher rents

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

One of B.C.'s hottest tourism destinations plans to crack down on unlicensed nightly home rentals on websites such as Airbnb in a bid to improve affordability and housing availability for long-term residents.

District of Tofino councillors voted this week to immediately educate people about and enforce regulations surrounding bed and breakfasts and short-term rentals, which have flourished since Airbnb entered the scene two to three years ago.

During the same time, rents went up and long-term rentals became harder to find, according to the motion by Tofino Mayor Josie Osborne.

Home rentals have been allowed in Tofino for the past decade if the owner gets a business licence — which costs up to $375 — but this rule is often ignored and is only enforced on a complaint basis, Osborne said.

"It's possible the people who found tools like Airbnb weren't aware that Tofino does regulate," Osborne said. "We want to make sure all of the property owners understand what the rules are."

Visitors may enjoy the Airbnb listings, but council is concerned such listings take much-needed apartments off the market for seasonal tourism workers in the hot spot that was featured in the New York Times twice last year.

In focus groups conducted by the district, they found that short-term rentals are "critical" for property owners to be able to afford to buy in Tofino in the first place. (Tofino's population was 1,876 in the 2011 census.)

But anecdotal evidence has made council suspicious that the conversion of long-term rentals to short-term rentals is leading to evictions and higher rents, Osborne said.

A screenshot of Airbnb listings in Tofino on Wednesday. AIRBNB

Tofino staff will immediately act to educate owners about and enforce rules for short-term rentals, and will also come up with a long-term plan to deal with the issue.

It's not yet clear how and when they will enforce the rules, but it would be easy enough (if time consuming) to look up who is renting units online and verify whether they have a business licence. As of Wednesday evening, Airbnb had 274 rentals listed for Tofino.

> **"The priority concern is it could be soaking up rental housing."**
> Coun. Geoff Meggs

That's barely any compared to Vancouver, where researchers estimate more than 4,000 listings. (Airbnb does not divulge the number of listings above 300.)

Vancouver is expecting staff to report back this fall on how to handle Airbnb, Coun. Geoff Meggs said Wednesday. As it stands, Vancouver deals with Airbnb on a complaint basis.

"The priority concern is it could be soaking up rental housing," he said, adding public safety is also a concern.

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NATURAL GAS

Supply greater than estimated

As British Columbia struggles to launch a proposed liquefied natural gas industry, a new report suggests the challenges have nothing to do with a lack of supply.

A National Energy Board report released by the province on Wednesday said natural gas resources in northeastern B.C. are trillions of cubic feet higher than initial estimates.

The study focused on the Liard Basin, a huge region of northeastern B.C., Yukon and Northwest Territories. The report said 848 trillion cubic feet of natural gas lies under B.C.'s portion of the basin, up from the previous estimate of 210 trillion cubic feet.

A release from the Ministry of Natural Gas Development said that pushes the province's total natural gas potential above 3,400 trillion cubic feet.

"British Columbia's resource potential is a competitive advantage over many other parts of the world," said Minister of Natural Gas Development Rich Coleman.

"This report shows our long-term prospects are stronger than before and that the Liard Basin can create economic activity and jobs in our province for a very long time to come," he said.

News of the increased stores came as truckers and other LNG advocates across northern B.C. prepared for simultaneous rallies on Wednesday in Terrace, Fort St. John and Fort Nelson.

Rally organizers hoped the demonstrations would reveal strong support for the Pacific Northwest LNG project.

It remains promising, but faces uncertainty before the completion of an environmental assessment, and consortium leader Petronas works to resolve environmental concerns and issues with First Nations.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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People cycle along a Union Street bike lane in Vancouver. A SFU researcher said cycling only makes up 1.9 per cent of all trips on the continent. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

Bike infrastructure pays off: Researcher

TRANSPORTATION

Connection found between score, increase in area cyclists

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

If you build it, they will ride.

A Simon Fraser University health-sciences researcher has found a direct correlation between a community's "Bike Score" and the number of cyclists who commute to work.

Meghan Winters and her colleagues found that every ten-unit increase in a neighbourhood's Bike Score was associated with a 0.5 per cent increase in the number of residents who commute to work via bicycle in 24 North American cities.

That may not sound like much, but Winters said it's a significant increase considering cycling only makes up 1.9 per cent of trips on the continent.

"Walk Score is a really commonly used tool. They're available in all of North America, but things that make a city walkable are different than things that make a city bikeable," said Winters, who also helped develop the Bike Score system, which rates bike-lane availability, topography and connectivity for cyclists on a scale of 1 to 100.

78
The City of Vancouver's **Bike Score**, a rating out of 100

Winters said it's useful for city planners to know that investing in cycling infrastructure, thus boosting its Bike Score, actually does increase the number of cyclists.

The Metro Vancouver region, for example, has set a 2040 goal of half of all trips being made by walking, bike or public transit.

The City of Vancouver, with its downtown separated bike lanes, myriad destinations within cycling distance and Bike Score of 78, announced in 2014 it had already achieved that goal, while the total distance driven by vehicle has fallen a total of 21 per cent since 2007.

While planners can't do much to change a city's topography, Winters said safer bike lanes, better connections and more bike paths could help encourage more commuters to take up cycling.

The study, published in the International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, is the first to link communities' bike scores with actual census data on bike use.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Clark vows to ensure schools have sexual-assault policies

Premier Christy Clark says her government will work with a member of the legislature to require post-secondary institutions to have sexual-assault policies.

Green party Leader Andrew Weaver introduced the Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Policies Act earlier this month requiring B.C.'s universities and colleges to write and maintain policies to prevent sexual violence.

Ontario and Manitoba have introduced similar bills, but B.C.'s Advanced Education Ministry has until now resisted calls for legislation, instead striking a working group to create a framework to provide guidance to universities.

Clark did not give a timeline for introducing legislation but said she agreed it was an urgent issue, and a rapist's "best friend" is the failure of authorities to recognize and act on complaints.

Advocates say many universities in Canada still lack standalone sexual-assault policies, which are thought to be crucial because they set out procedures for responding to complaints and outline support services for victims. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Talking housing 'urgency'

REAL ESTATE

Emergency town hall attracts hundreds

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

The demand for solutions to Metro Vancouver's insane real-estate market seems as insatiable as the demand for housing itself, NDP MLA David Eby said before a sold-out Emergency Housing Town Hall meeting on Wednesday night.

More than 750 residents were expected to attend the town hall to discuss the housing crisis in the Lower Mainland, a meeting Eby called to give people a forum to discuss solutions and share their troubles in hopes of convincing the provincial government to take action to cool the housing market.

"A big part of tonight's meeting is to communicate some of the urgency to a government that seems totally out of touch on this issue," Eby said, noting the B.C. Liberals have called the situation "unusual" but stopped short of calling it a crisis.

"(The B.C. Liberals) do not believe there is a crisis in the Lower Mainland despite the fact that young people are fleeing Metro Vancouver in record numbers," he said.

The demand for the town hall was so large that Eby had to change venues twice to accommodate the crowd.

Experts addressed the crowd to provide possible solutions to the housing crisis. Sauder School of Business professor Tom Davidoff presented the plan, pitched by himself and other UBC and SFU academics, to tax owners who buy properties as investments and keep them empty. The meeting also discussed closing loopholes in the property transfer tax that allow so-called "shadow flipping."

Vancouver's West End neighbourhood. City residents attended a forum on Wednesday night with hopes of convincing the province to help cool the housing market. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

> I hope to give some hope to people who are incredibly distressed about what they see happening.
> NDP MLA David Eby

"I hope to give some hope to people who are incredibly distressed about what they see happening in our communities," Eby said.

Residents also got the floor to discuss their problems and what they've witnessed in their neighbourhoods. Ultimately, Eby hopes, their stories will get the province to admit there's a problem and take decisive action.

"Seven-hundred-fifty people at a community meeting is a very powerful symbol.... I hope it will encourage (our government) to act."

TRAGEDY

Daredevil snowmobiler killed in avalanche

A man considered an icon of extreme snowmobiling in British Columbia has been killed in an avalanche.

The coroners service says 45-year-old Daniel Davidoff was found dead Monday in mountains near his hometown of Castlegar in south-central B.C.

Regional coroner Larry Marzinzik says Davidoff was reported missing after failing to return from a planned solo snowmobiling trip.

He says a search team found the man's body on Tuesday morning near College Creek Forestry Road and determined he had been struck by a snowslide.

Many people have posted online tributes to Davidoff, who was dubbed the "Krazy Canadian" for his appearances in numerous snowmobiling films showing his enthusiastic participation in the backcountry sport.

RCMP and the BC Coroners Service are continuing to investigate.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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West Vancouver
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Street style

Michelle Kuhnreich, personal trainer & fashion blogger

What she's wearing: Outfit is all from affordable shops. Forever 21, H&M, and Army and Navy.

COURTESY VANCOUVER FASHION WEEK

Jerome Mendoza, model

What he's wearing: A mixture of Topshop and American Apparel.

VANCOUVER FASHION WEEK Event runs until Sunday at the Chinese Cultural Centre. For more info visit vanfashionweek.com.

A call to bring back the human rights commission

Former head says B.C. has suffered since abolishment

#HANDS AGAINST RACISM

Tereza Verenca
Metro | Vancouver

The former head of the B.C. Human Rights Commission, which was abolished in 2002 under Gordon Campbell's Liberals, says the commission needs to be reinstated.

"A significant part of its mandate was to educate the public about the rights and obligations under the human rights legislation. Nobody is doing that right now," said Harinder Mahil, who served as deputy chief commissioner from 1997 to 2001, then as acting chief commissioner from 2001 until the day of his firing.

"Lots of people in British Columbia don't even know what their rights are," he told Metro.

During Mahil's time at the helm, like all other provinces, B.C. had both a human rights commission and a tribunal. The former investigated complaints, educated the public when it came to discrimination and racism and spoke out on issues. The commission also had the power to put forward policy and carry out inquiries. The tribunal in turn would hold the hearings and make decisions.

One of the reasons for abolishing the commission was that there were too many delays and duplications, according to a Globe and Mail interview with then-Attorney-General Geoff Plant. "It is complicated, inefficient and slow. It can take years for a case to be heard, and justice delayed is justice denied," Plant said at the time.

But Mahil said without a commission, the public interest isn't taken into account. He gave the example of a woman filing a complaint against her employer for unequal pay when compared to her male co-workers.

Harinder Mahil CONTRIBUTED

"A commission would actually become a third party to that complaint, saying all women working for this employer must be paid the same," Mahil explained.

"That broader perspective, which is extremely important, is not there. A tribunal adjudicates complaints. It doesn't have any mandate to educate the public or start a public campaign. It's like going to small claims court," he added.

Before the commission was abolished, Mahil said he and his colleagues were about to launch a public inquiry, looking at the low graduation rate amongst First Nations children.

"We wanted to look at why that was the case, what was happening," he said, adding everyone was "extremely disappointed" when they learned their government body was no more.

Today, Mahil works in labour relations at a union. He was one of many guest speakers featured this month on AM 1200 Spice Radio as part of the Raise Your Hands Against Racism movement. (On March 19, Metro Vancouverites are encouraged to raise their hand and post a selfie to social media with the hashtag #HandsAgainstRacism.)

"It's an important campaign. It acknowledges, in the name itself, that there's still racism in our society," said Mahil. "For us to rectify a problem, we are to acknowledge that it exists and then take steps to deal with it."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau meets with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations in New York on Wednesday.
KENA BETANCUR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Canada to 'step up'

UNITED NATIONS

Trudeau aims to win back seat on security council in 2021

Canada will vie to win back a seat on the United Nations Security Council, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says.

"We are determined to help the UN make even greater strides in support of its goals for all humanity," Trudeau said Wednesday in the lobby of UN headquarters in New York.

"My friends, it's time. It's time for Canada to step up once again," Trudeau said.

Canada will seek to win back a seat for the 2021-2022 term, Trudeau said.

As he made his much-anticipated announcement, Trudeau said that Canada has a long and honoured history with the United Nations that dates back to its founding in 1945.

"We are determined to revitalize Canada's role in peacekeeping," Trudeau said.

He said that his government has made pushes forward in recent months on issues like gender equality, refugee resettlement, respect for diversity, stability in the Mideast and answers to climate change, all of which are in sync with UN goals.

Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 members, and each member has one vote. Under the Charter, all member states are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

The Security Council attempts to settle disputes peacefully and makes recommendations for terms of settlement in disputes. It can also impose sanctions and authorize the use of force.

The 190-plus members of the General Assembly won't vote on new candidates until the fall of 2020 so it will take at least five more years before Canada could start a two-year term.

That means Trudeau will have to win another federal election in 2019 if he wants to personally see Canada come "back."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE, WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

PM wants family friendly Parliament

Setting aside parental leave that can only be taken by fathers may be a way of improving the flexibility available to young families, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday before a clearly approving audience at the United Nations.

He said it is important to encourage parental leave and even single out leave just for dads. He said he and his government are trying to make Parliament more family friendly, saying it's time to update an institution "designed for old, white guys."

Businesses and organizations can be encouraged to be more open to equality, he added. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SYRIA

Next priority: Finding jobs for refugees

Progress has been made on finding housing for Syrian refugees but the next big challenge is getting them a job, Immigration Minister John McCallum said Wednesday.

Recent figures suggest 69 per cent of the refugees outside Quebec have found permanent accommodation, up from 52 per cent a few weeks ago, he said.

"When you have huge numbers of refugees coming in at the same time, you never solve the problem overnight," McCallum noted. "There are always hiccups and bumps along the road, but I think the speed with which the housing issue has been addressed augurs well."

The numbers don't include those from Quebec, which has its own program and where housing hasn't created the same dilemmas as in the rest of the country.

McCallum says the problem was most pronounced in larger cities like Vancouver and Toronto, where 50 per cent of refugees have now found homes, up from 30 per cent a few weeks ago.

The immigration minister says most should be housed by the end of April and the rest by the end of June.

The Trudeau government met its initial goal of accepting 25,000 Syrian refugees at the end of February. Finding jobs becomes the next priority, and McCallum is speaking this week with industry representatives.

Government-sponsored refugees don't often have a lot of education, but McCallum is confident refugees will be able to find work after getting some language education.

"I know there are many companies keen to employ these individuals and I know there are many industries in Canada with relatively low-skilled labour that have had chronic problems filling those jobs," McCallum said.

He was speaking at the Foundation of Greater Montreal's announcement of $750,000 worth of aid to local groups sponsoring Syrian refugees. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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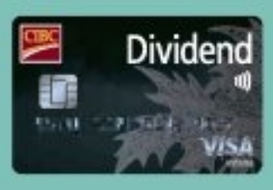

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IN BRIEF

American sentenced to 15 years in North Korea
North Korea's highest court sentenced an American tourist to 15 years in prison with hard labour for subversion on Wednesday, weeks after authorities presented him to media and he tearfully confessed that he had tried to steal a propaganda banner.

Otto Warmbier, 21, a University of Virginia undergraduate, was convicted and sentenced in a one-hour trial in North Korea's Supreme Court.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Morocco cuts peacekeeping
The Moroccan government is reducing its staff and support for the UN peacekeeping operation in the Western Sahara to protest UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's recent comments about the disputed territory. Ban recently visited Saharan refugee camps and referred to Morocco's "occupation" of Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony that was annexed in 1975. Morocco regarded the term as an insult. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Obama nominates successor to Scalia

Ignoring Republican threats, U.S. President Barack Obama nominated appeals court judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court on Wednesday, thrusting a respected moderate jurist and former prosecutor into the centre of an election-year clash over the future of the nation's highest court.

Obama cast the 63-year-old Garland as "a serious man and an exemplary judge" deserving of a full hearing and a Senate confirmation vote, despite Republican vows to deny him both. Standing in the White House Rose Garden with Garland, Obama argued the integrity of the court was at stake and appealed to the Senate to "play it straight" in filling the seat left vacant by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

"It's supposed to be above politics," Obama said of the high court. "It has to be. And it should stay that way."

Republican leaders, however, held to their refusal to consider any nominee, saying the seat should be filled by the next president after this year's election.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. President Barack Obama walks with Judge Merrick B. Garland, before announcing his nomination to the Supreme Court, Wednesday. GETTY IMAGES

Syrian refugee Mariam Aloush, 8, from Homs, Syria. "I remember our home in Syria and my school there. I just want to go back," said Mariam.

Syrian refugee Mohammed Bandar, 12, from Hama, Syria. "I want to become a doctor to be able to help people," said Mohammed.

Syrian refugee boy Ahmad Zughayar, 6, from Deir el-Zour, Syria. "I remember the sound of bombings on homes in Deir el-Zour," said Ahmad.

Yasmeen Mohammed, 11, from Eastern Ghouta, Syria. Yasmeen, whose family fled their town, said she misses her old life. "All I want is to go back to my school in Syria and see my friends," she said.

ALL PHOTOS MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syrians mark fifth year since uprising

CONFLICT

War rages on as Moscow rises, U.S. retreats, Syria suffers

As Syrians mark the fifth anniversary of the uprising against President Bashar Assad, here are some of the key events in the conflict:

March 2011: Protests erupt in the city of Dara over security forces' detention of a group of boys accused of painting anti-government graffiti on the walls of their school. On March 18, security forces open fire on a protest in Dara, killing four people in what activists regard as the first deaths of the uprising.

August 2011: U.S. President Barack Obama calls on Assad to resign and orders Syrian government assets frozen.

March 2013: Rebel forces capture Raqqah, a city of 500,000 people on the Euphrates River.

June 2014: Syrians in government areas vote in presidential elections. Assad, one of three candidates, overwhelmingly wins with 88.7 per cent.

September 2015: Russia begins launching airstrikes in Syria in support of Assad's forces.

November 2015: Seventeen nations meeting in Vienna adopt a timeline for a transition plan in Syria that includes a new constitution as well as UN-administered parliamentary and presidential elections within 18 months.

March 2016: The UN's Syria envoy says indirect peace talks will resume in Geneva. Russian President Vladimir Putin announces his armed forces will begin withdrawing from Syria.

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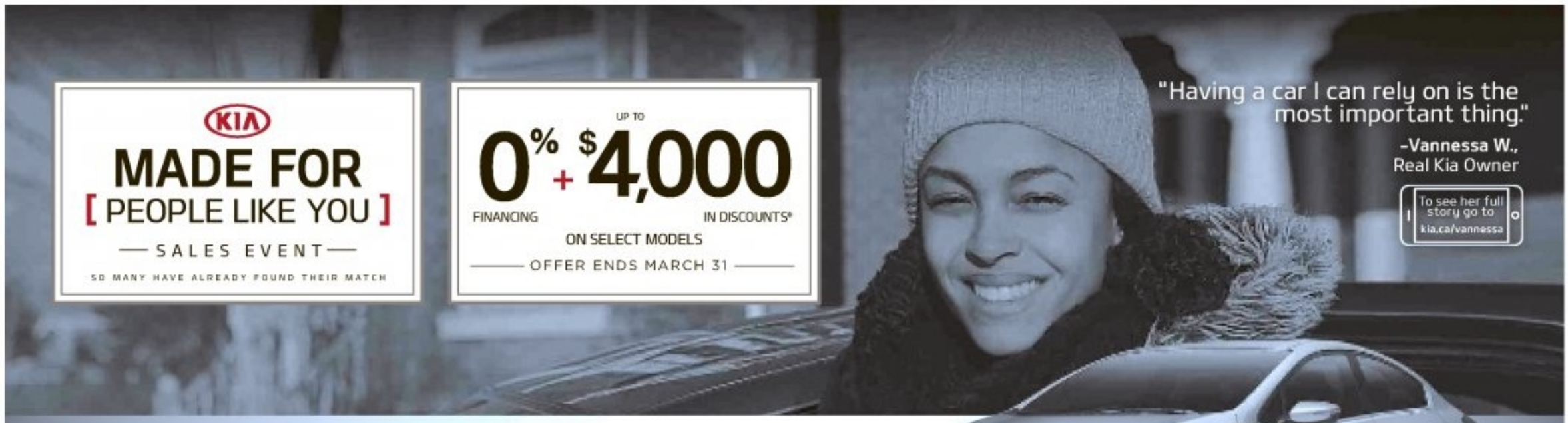

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Forte SX AT shown[2]

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ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION

New app splits cheque based on privilege

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

A new app can help you check your privilege when it comes time to split the cheque.

EquiTable takes a restaurant bill, divides it by the number of diners and adjusts how much each person owes based on the wage gap between genders and races. So, a white man out for dinner with a black woman would fork over more cash to cover the bill.

"It doesn't split the bill equally; it splits it equitably," said the app's creator, Luna Malbroux, who noted the wage gap calculation is based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics.

Malbroux, a comedian and anti-bias educator from California, admits the app has its tongue planted firmly in cheek but said it's a fun way to start a conversation about a serious issue.

> **It doesn't split the bill equally, it splits it equitably.**
> Luna Malbroux, EquiTable creator

"I hope it helps people think a little bit more about how the wage gap affects different people," she said.

In Canada, a recent report showed women earn an average of $8,000 less a year than men, a wage gap that's twice the global average.

Malbroux said the gap grows larger when factors such as race or disability are factored in.

EquiTable plans to launch on iOS later this week.

NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHER STEPS DOWN John Cruickshank has announced he is stepping down as publisher of the Toronto Star and president of the Star Media Group, effective May 4. His final day coincides with Torstar's annual meeting. He will continue to serve as co-chairman of Canadian Press Enterprises (CPE) and as one of Torstar's directors on the CPE board. "Today, I am announcing that I'm ready to leave scaling new journalistic heights to someone with less-arthritic limbs and more recently acquired tools and skills," Cruickshank said in a statement on Wednesday.
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Women get career help

RETURN TO WORK

Program aims to get women in finance back on track

Meric Koksal, pictured on the CIBC trading floor in Toronto.
CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In 2012, after a 12-year career working for global investment banks in Asia and the United States, Meric Koksal did what many women do at some point in their lives: she put her career on pause.

Koksal wanted to spend more time with her two young daughters and pursue her interest in pilates. After three years, Koksal moved to Canada in 2014 with an eye to getting back into finance.

Through her networking efforts, Koksal discovered the Return to Bay Street Program, run by advocacy and networking group Women in Capital Markets.

The program, now in its fifth year, has helped 22 women including Koksal return to their careers in finance by setting them up with four-month paid contracts at large Canadian financial institutions. Twenty-one of those women have since landed full-time jobs.

This year, Return to Bay Street is expanding to Montreal, starting with a workshop next Tuesday that will help candidates prepare for the application process.

Jennifer Reynolds, the president and CEO of Women in Capital Markets, says she hopes some of the contracts secured for applicants this year will be in Montreal, where National Bank, one of the participating financial institutions, has a sizable presence.

Reynolds says part of the program's success has been rooted in the fact that it allows women to re-enter the industry at a similar level to where they were when they left — rather than starting from scratch in a junior position such as an associate.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, March 17, 2016

CHANTAL HÉBERT ON LEADERSHIP ON THE LEFT

Most New Democrats would not be terribly unhappy to see Mulcair bow out. But those who believe he is all that stands in the way of a less centrist NDP are taking their dreams for reality.

As the New Democrats ponder the future of their federal party and leadership, here are a few inconvenient truths they might have to face up to.

1 Yes, the NDP lost the last federal campaign on a fiscal and social platform that the Liberals could have written. The key planks of yearly balanced budgets and a national childcare program were lifted from outdated red books. It was a decidedly middle-of-the-road document.

But the party has also never won an election on a platform that was not centrist. That was true in Saskatchewan in the days of Alan Blakeney and Roy Romanow, and in Manitoba under Howard Pawley, Gary Doer and Greg Selinger.

Over the last decade Nova Scotia's NDP hugged the centre all the way to a solo term in government. And Rachel Notley did not win power in Alberta last spring on the promise of a socialist revolution.

Overall, the NDP has tended to do best in provinces where it could substitute itself for a weak Liberal party. But a stronger New Democrat presence has not translated into more progressive governance in those provinces than the Canadian average.

In the big picture, the NDP's finish last October was its second-best ever. By comparison, the last time voters had coalesced behind the Liberals to usher out the Conservatives was 1993 and the New Democrats were left with nine seats, three short of the minimum required to hold official party status in the House of Commons.

The NDP has tended to do best in provinces where it could substitute itself for a weak Liberal party.

MIDDLE MAN The problem with the NDP's 2015 federal-election platform under Thomas Mulcair was not that it veered too far to the right, but that it was risk-averse and forgettable, Chantal Hébert writes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

From the outside, one of the glaring weaknesses of the last NDP platform was not that it leaned too far to the right but that it was risk-adverse to the point of being eminently forgettable. But then, the same could be said of Jack Layton's 2011 platform.

2 The next federal election is almost four years away and the prospect of a national victory for the NDP is possibly even more remote. But the party does not live or die on the sole basis of its federal performance. British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta — to name just those three — will all be going to the polls before 2019.

Some NDP activists would have the federal party adopt the so-called LEAP manifesto. It would, among things, commit a New Democrat government to reject trade deals, oppose new pipelines and ensure fossil fuels stay in the ground.

For the record, the Greens have promoted some of the LEAP ideas for a while and found only modest traction for them. And in the last British Columbia election, NDP fortunes went in decline after the party firmed up its anti-pipeline rhetoric. It was a strategic move designed to make a dent in Green support but ultimately a call that cost more votes than it attracted.

The NDP would be more likely to implode than to ever unite behind the LEAP manifesto.

3 It is an urban legend that the 2012 leadership campaign saw the federal New Democrats choose the quest for power over party principles. In fact, the winner, the runner-up and the third-place candidate in that race were all political pragmatists.

Mulcair had spent his provincial political career on the Liberal benches of the national assembly in Quebec. But Brian Topp — who finished second — had cut his teeth in the backrooms of Romanow's centrist Saskatchewan governments and helped steer the federal NDP in the same direction under Layton. Nathan Cullen finished a strong third on a platform to seek a formal alliance with the Liberals.

When some defeated MPs opine that they no longer recognize the NDP in the party that Mulcair leads, one can only wonder what they think it would have looked like under the men who were the second and third choices of the membership more than three years ago.

Most New Democrats would not be terribly unhappy to see Mulcair bow out. He might not even earn enough support on a confidence vote next month to stay on. But those who believe he is all that stands in the way of a less centrist NDP are taking their dreams for reality. If the New Democrats' choices boiled down to keeping their current leader or going hard left, my money would be on Mulcair.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

The media couldn't have helped Trump more if he paid us

We knew we were doing it. We just couldn't help ourselves.

And if Trump makes it to the White House, many will blame the media, in part, for his victory.

Who could argue with them? The coverage has been overwhelming. From the start, we were hooked on Trump like a bad habit. He was the headline we couldn't run enough.

Sure, readers devoured the jokes and think pieces. But if he wins, we're going to have to lie in the bed we helped make. And it's going to be prickly as hell.

We're all going to get the Megyn Kelly treatment, and already are. During last night's primary victory speech, amid jeers from the crowd, Trump accused the media of "lies, deceit, viciousness, disgusting reporters, horrible people." Not only will Trump call us names, restrict our access, and generally infringe on our ability to do our job — but his supporters will love him for it.

And we're going to feel a lot like Republican leaders: sheepish that we didn't see it coming, this toppling from our pedestal, this hollowing-out of respect. Because the media, in the eyes of Trump-lovers, Sanders-lovers, and many others, are the establishment. And we should burn right along with it.

How ironically well we've aided that message. While the New York Times has been accused of being the mouthpiece for Hillary Clinton's campaign, and Fox News for Marco Rubio's, every American media outlet and many international ones have combined to become Trump's megaphone. We couldn't have done any better if he paid us. When the Times measured Trump's paid advertising versus free media coverage this week, his lead was gargantuan: nearly $1.9 billion worth of free media. Clinton was second, with less than half that. The best of the others had less than a quarter.

Yes, I'm adding to the total. But then again, Trump can't be ignored. And if Canadians think we're immune from the forces propelling his candidacy, we should think again. Many mainstream media skeptics reside north of the border. We, too, have income inequality and racism. We, too, are witnessing dramatic social and economic change. And we have our own corporate reality-TV star (Kevin O'Leary) waiting in the wings to pet egos and dull intellect.

No, we're not the U.S. But populism is also rising in Europe. Why not here? A popular meme calls Trump "what would happen if the comments section became a human and ran for president."

Read the comments sections on Canadian sites, and tell me that joke doesn't land.

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metro LIFE

Your essential daily news

Thursday, March 17, 2016

1 in 5
young children given cold remedies despite warning against their use: study

Memoir out of Antarctica

TORSTEN BLACKWOOD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Author Jean McNeil adds a memoir, Ice Diaries, to her novel and poetry collection based on her experience of living as a writer-in-residence in Antarctica. CONTRIBUTED

WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

Author reveals reality of life of isolation on ice continent

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

The closest most of us will ever get to Antarctica is watching nature documentaries or animated films starring dancing penguins. For those willing to hand over the cash, there are cruises that offer "drive-by" views of its icebergs and seal colonies, but few have actually set foot on the world's coldest, southern-most continent, let alone live there for any amount of time.

"When you go to the Antarctic you're initiated into a select society," says author Jean McNeil. "It's a little bit like being part of the NASA team; it's like you're off the planet. The rest of the world peels away while you're there."

For four months in 2005, the Nova Scotia–born author became part of that select society as a writer-in-residence with the British Antarctic Survey, working and living alongside a team of scientists. McNeil, who previously wrote a novel and poetry collection inspired by Antarctica, never intended to write a memoir about the experience, but her new book, Ice Diaries, is a welcome literary-minded addition to a category of books dominated by male explorers.

Published by ECW Press, Ice Diaries blends McNeil's journal entries with ruminations on the harsh environment and climate change, woven with a side storyline about her rough upbringing in Eastern Canada that she recounts as being filled with its own dangers and hardship. McNeil, who now lives in London and teaches creative writing at the University of East Anglia, often had to justify her presence as a novelist to the team of geologists and oceanographers. "It's hard to not to feel very useless in an environment where so many people are so capable," she says. "Everyone else there could look at each other and know what they were doing; they knew so-and-so was there to put up meteorological balloons. But with me, I had a lot of explaining to do."

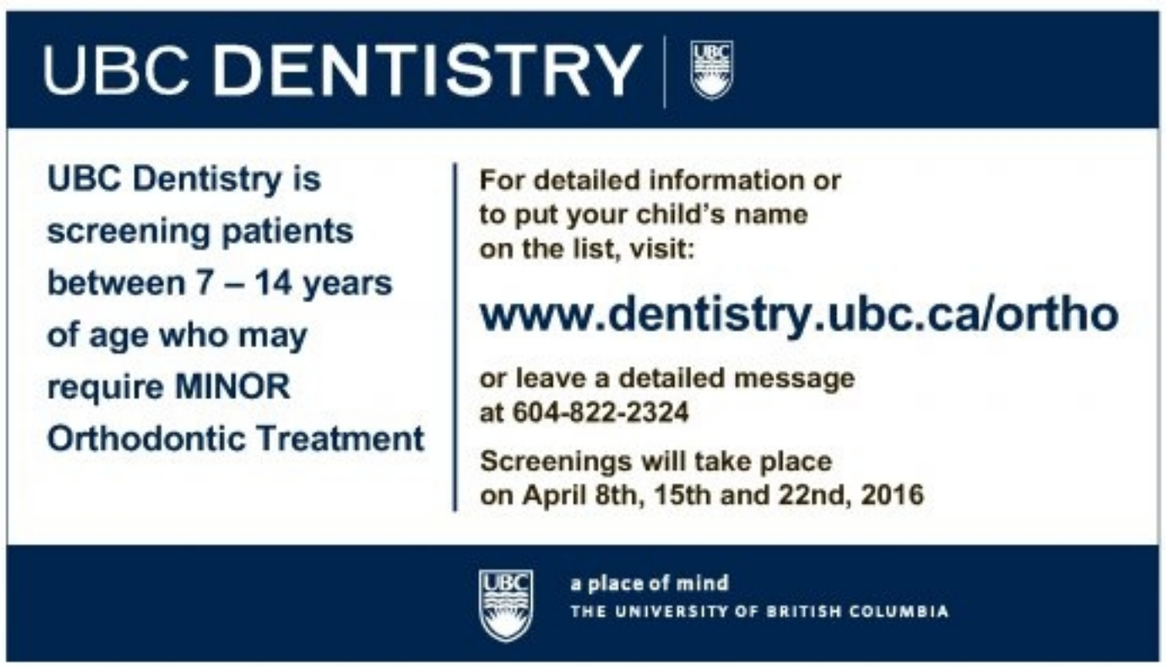
It's like you're off the planet. The rest of the world peels away while you're there.
Jean McNeil on her time in Antarctica

As an active member of the team, McNeil expanded her scientific knowledge, developing a particular interest in glaciology. She also learned about her own limits while battling an intense sense of entrapment and paranoia, brought on not just from being geographically isolated, but from living and working in close quarters with a tightknit group of people.

"I felt very claustrophobic and confined," she says. "When you have those powerful emotional swings in one's normal life there are ways you can mitigate that. You can go for a walk in the park or see your friends or family, or go have a coffee at a Starbucks or wherever. Symbolically here, there's no escape from your emotions. I think a lot of people make a mistake in thinking that when you go to place like that, it's all about the landscape and the natural wildlife, but what it really is about is other people."

McNeil, who says she wrote the book partly on behalf of the Antarctic, knew she would have to dispel the romance of the place and be honest about the challenges she faced. "People are expected to come back and deliver 'it was the most wonderful time of my life' narrative. The writer, of course, is that person who deals in much more grey areas," she says. "The Antarctic is a very good way to get to know yourself."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.



Finding humour in her depression

REVIEW

How Melissa Broder turned Twitter feed into book deal

"I've been awake 7 minutes and it's already too much," reads a tweet from @SoSadToday.

Melissa Broder started the anonymous Twitter account while working in publicity at Penguin Random House as a place to exercise dark humour and attempt to empty out her anxious thoughts.

As her followers grew into the hundreds of thousands, including celebrity names such as Katy Perry, it snowballed into a column for VICE.

At VICE, Broder still wrote anonymously, experimenting with essays, advice and interviews with porn professionals. Broder, a published poet in her early 30s, kept her name off her work until last year when she secured a book deal based on the concept.

So Sad Today is an extension of Broder's Twitter account, with 18 personal essays touching religion, addiction, extramarital affairs, counting calories and Botox.

The book is intimate, unfiltered and painfully honest — for instance, there's an entire chapter on her vomit fetish. Broder told Rolling Stone she dictated most of the book to Siri while driving around Los Angeles, which explains why it reads like a stream of consciousness rather than something carefully and deliberately constructed.

The advantage of this form is it gives reader a raw portrayal of how Broder experiences depression and anxiety — how she manages suicidal thoughts, found the right mix of medication and her reasons behind meditation.

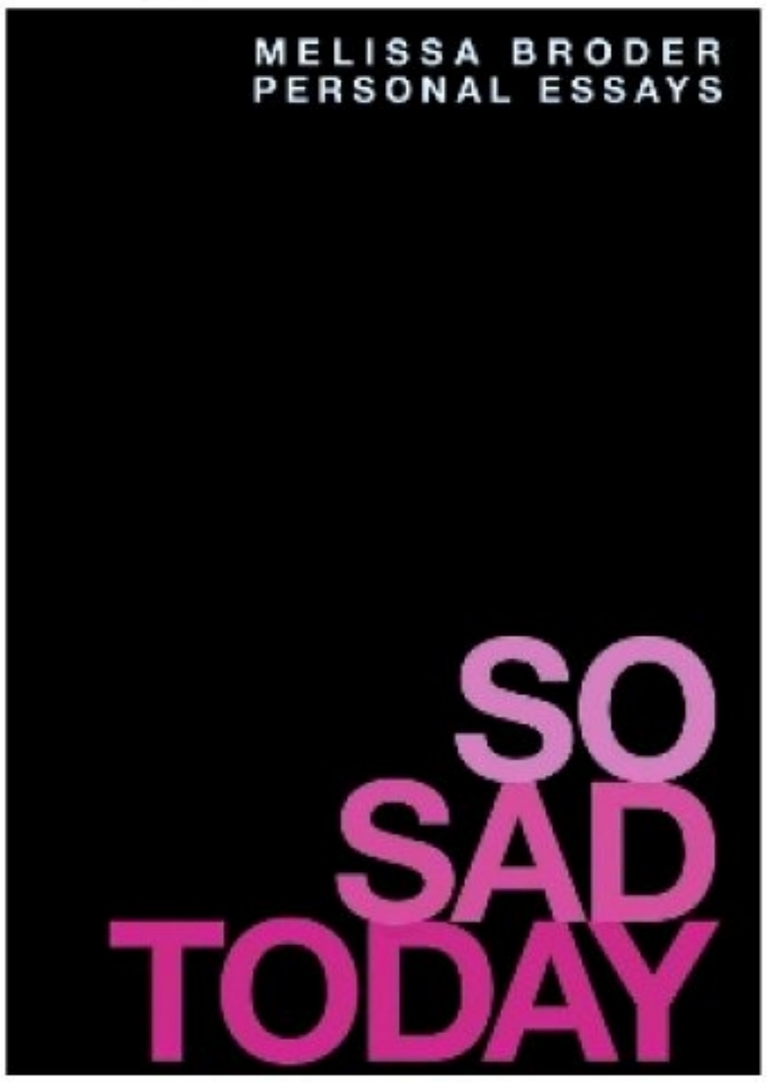
She communicates what a big part of her life her illness is while remaining able to see humour in it. "The ocean gives me performance anxiety about being at peace," she writes.

Although she writes that she's constantly fretting about what people think about her, Broder is still open (and funny) when addressing her shortcomings — ranging from her struggles with addiction to romance: "I've been romantically obsessed with so many people that I've kind of become a getting-over-the-fantasy-of-people athlete."

But this immersion into Broder's thoughts can also feel like an unedited Internet diary, one that many may roll their eyes at as a quintessentially millennial form — self-absorbed, devoting a chapter to a sexting exchange.

If you're looking for a deep, thoughtful memoir addressing mental illness, this may not be the book for you. If you're looking for a window into one woman's experience with this illness in an age where someone is always watching, it's worth a try. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

> **The ocean gives me performance anxiety about being at peace**
> Melissa Broder



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OUTERWEAR OR STATEMENT WEAR

Ditch your down fill: Montreal designer craves return to coats for every occasion

Marisa Minicucci believes it's time for coats to be the focal point of the wardrobe.

"It's the piece that every woman should really think (about) and re-evaluate, and make it the statement piece," said the veteran Montreal-based designer, with more than three decades of industry experience.

"The puffer (coat) is great and there's beautiful ones out there, but now it's time to return to a coat for every occasion."

Minicucci is the lead designer of new outerwear label Sosken Studios. Sosken is the Norwegian word for "sister."

With a glowing neon sign bearing the label's name at the entry to the runway, and miniature lights lining the walkway, Sosken unveiled a vast range of outerwear offerings each etched with distinctive details.

Coats were adorned with everything from epaulettes to houndstooth sleeves, with a rich assortment of colours and patterns for all tastes, including creamy neutrals and more richly-hued shades. THE CANADIAN PRESS

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

HoC's maternal manipulation

THE SHOW: House of Cards, Season 4, Episode 10 (Netflix)
THE MOMENT: The Deathbed

In the cynical world of House of Cards, Claire Underwood (Robin Wright, left) may stand to benefit from the sympathy vote if her mother, Elizabeth (Ellen Burstyn, right), passes away before the election. CONTRIBUTED

Claire Underwood (Robin Wright), who's running for U.S. vice-president, is talking to her mother Elizabeth (Ellen Burstyn), who wants Claire to hasten her imminent death.

"When you were small, you would sit at that window every night, trying to make the sun rise all by yourself," Elizabeth says. "Your daddy would put you in bed after you'd fallen asleep with your face against the glass. I was so jealous."

"Of me and daddy?" Claire asks.

"That you believed you could make the sun rise," Elizabeth answers.

"I can't do it, Mother," Claire says. "I can't do what you want me to do."

"Claire," Elizabeth says flatly. "It would help you win."

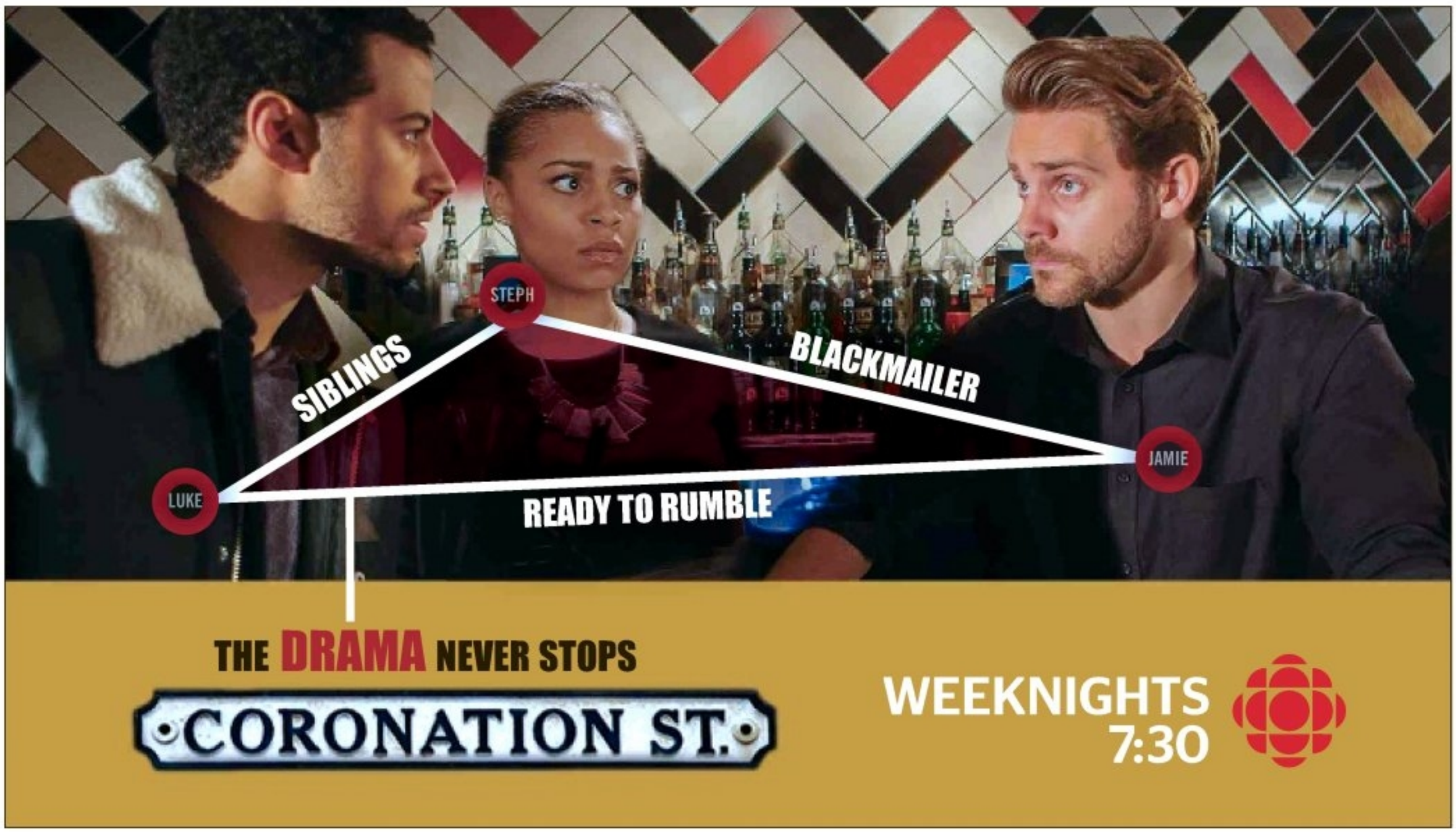
I was relieved when this scene came along, because I was losing patience with this season, and this show. It's at once too cynical (there is not one decent soul in all of government) and too silly (a husband and wife running for president and VP? Come on).

House of Cards' strength, however, is scenes like the one above: the dramatization of how easily people are manipulated, even (or especially) if the end result is not in their best interests.

Its writers couldn't have anticipated the absurdist reality show that is Donald Trump. But both point up the risk of democracy. A vote is a vote, no matter how under-educated, narrow-minded or loopily sentimental the voter.

As threatening as Frank Underwood (Kevin Spacey) tries to be, there is nothing more dangerous than a citizen with his/her hand on the wrong lever.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.



5 CARTOONISTS THAT GRAPHIC ARTISTS TODAY DRAW ON

Cartoons are being used more and more as a means for social satire or to tell more adult stories. We wanted to know which cartoonists have most influenced a new generation of graphic artists and novelists. Here's what they said:

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

1 MariNaomi on Mary Fleener

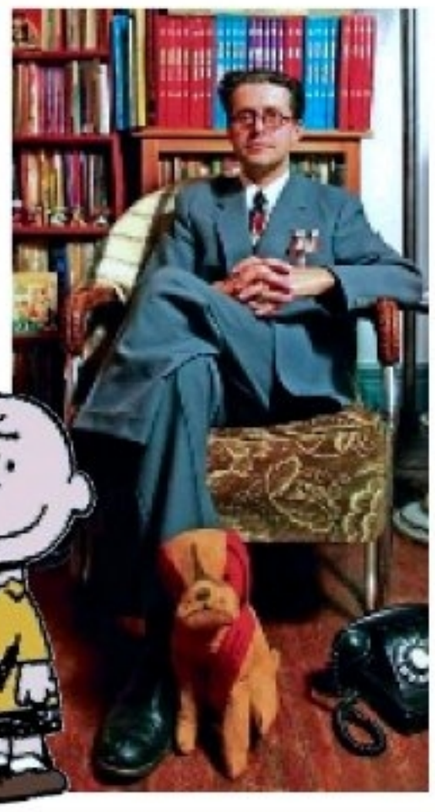
"I'd been reading indie comics for a few years before I came across Mary Fleener's work in Twisted Sisters: A Collection of Bad Girl Art. Her story The Jelly, about her hot-mess of a roommate, made me laugh and cringe and think, "Hey, I've got stories like that, too!" Next thing I knew, I was making my first comic. It's been 19 years and this fun thing has somehow become What I Do. Thanks."

2 Kate Beaton on Eleanor Davis

"Eleanor Davis because her work was an early standout; she was someone younger like me, but her style was so fully realized and beautiful to look at. She was such an ace storyteller, and I wanted to have come as far as she did by that point but I had a long way to go."

3 Seth on Charles Schulz

"It's a complicated question to answer. There is no ONE cartoonist to be chosen as THE influence. Looking back, the answer to that question would have changed by the decade — more a process of inspiration than a single figure. Each new figure providing another step in the process of figuring out what kind of artist I wished to be ... Certainly the primary influence would be Charles Schulz. Fifty years of integrity in his work. Deep work. Profound, personal and yet funny and accessible; confident clean lines and elegant simplicity of design. The Master Cartoonist."



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4 Georgia Webber on Bill Watterson

"Deeply, emphatically, unequivocally: Bill Watterson. In all the ways that one's work can be influenced — aesthetically, politically, emotionally, colour, storytelling, text — it's Watterson's approach to his art, his conviction about it, that is my guiding star. He worked for passion, yes, and for fun, that too, but also for the betterment of this world and the chosen medium of his efforts. Calvin and Hobbes is so whole, so bittersweet, and so much greater than the sum of its parts. While my work is entirely different in almost every way, Watterson showed me how to bring my heart to it."

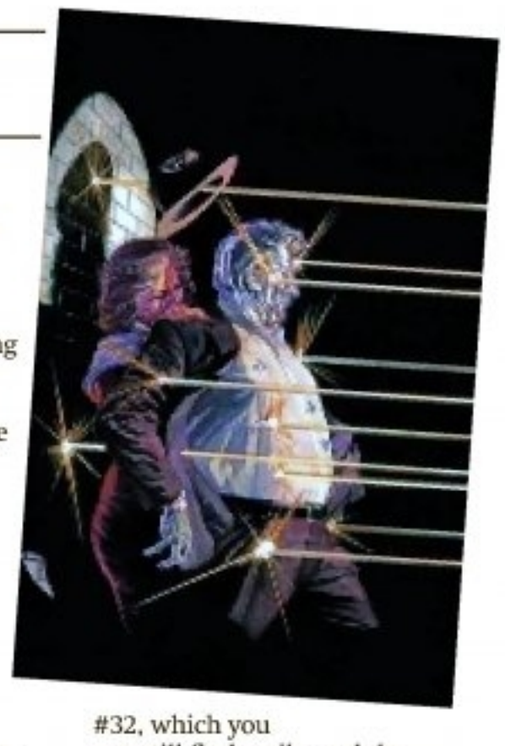
5 Teva Harrison on Art Spiegelman

"As long as I can remember, Art Spiegelman's art has been there. From my collection of Garbage Pail Kids cards in elementary school to my first awareness of graphic memoir, Spiegleman showed me the diversity of possibility for comic arts. When the Art Gallery of Ontario showed his work, I visited over and over to study his lines and the way he breaks frame. His candour, experimentation and unconventional approach to the page continue to inspire me."

NOIR COMICS

Steeljack, the shiny gumshoe, is back

Mike Donachie
Metro | Canada



ASTRO CITY #33
BY: Kurt Busiek, Brent Eric Anderson and Alex Ross
PUBLISHER: DC/Vertigo

One of the most compelling characters in comics has made a quiet return, and that's appropriate. He's the quiet type.

Steeljack, aka the Steeljacketed Man, aka Carl Donewicz, is the down-at-heel former supervillain who haunts the back streets of Astro City as a tatty, yet shiny, gumshoe trying to help the little guy.

His debut adventure, The Tarnished Angel, is widely available in collected form, and highly recommended for anyone who loves a hopeless underdog. Steeljack, whose look was based on Robert Mitchum if he'd been coated in metal, returned to the monthly Astro City book in #32, which you can still find easily, and the second part of the story is out this week.

As is traditional in the noir genre, the case starts with a "dame" walking into the detective's office. Steeljack's old flame Cutlass wants to clear her name, and he's already regretting agreeing to help.

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MEET THE CONDO

New heights in the heart of the city

Project overview

The ARC is an exciting new addition to the False Creek Central neighbourhood in downtown Vancouver. The Concord Pacific project, which is in the shape of a waving flag, consists of two towers, linked together by an eight-storey span. The high-rise condo will be opening in 2019.

In the neighbourhood

ARC residents are right in the heart of the city, with lots of dining and shopping options. Vancouver's sports and entertainment districts are also steps away, making it the ideal home for urban dwellers. Parks, daycares, community centres, schools and the seawall are also nearby.

Housing amenities

There's an indoor pool with a glass bottom, suspended 200 feet from the ground. A fitness centre, a touchless carwash, 100 per cent EV parking stalls and an outdoor patio deck are also on offer. Home amenities include a Miele appliance package and an expandable room.

Location and transit

The ARC is centrally located, with a couple of SkyTrain stations a few blocks away, making it convenient to get to places like the airport or the waterfront. Given that amenities are so close, residents can commute by bike via the city's bike lanes.

CONTRIBUTED

NEED TO KNOW

What: The ARC
Builder: Concord Pacific
Designer: Liv Interiors
Location: False Creek
Building: High-rise condo
Sizes: Contact sales team
Pricing: Available upon request

Model: One to three bedroom options
Status: Pre-sales
Occupancy: Spring 2019
Sales centre: 88 Pacific Blvd.
Phone: 604-899-8800
Website: arcvancouver.com

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*Canadian residents who have reached the age of majority in their province or territory can enter the contest at www.hyundaisupersearch.com between February 13, 2016 at 12:01am (ET) and April 4, 2016 at 11:59pm (PT). One entry per each Weekly Prize. One entry per Grand Prize. Four (4) Weekly Prizes of CDN$2,500.00 each, and one (1) Grand Prize of CDN$20,000.00. To be eligible for Grand Prize, contest participant must perform test drive of a new Hyundai vehicle at a Canadian Hyundai dealership and submit the correct answer to the final SuperSearch Clue. To be eligible for secondary Weekly Prizes, contest participant must submit the correct answer for each respective Weekly SuperSearch Clue. Each Weekly Prize is exclusive of each other; answer submission for all Weekly Prizes is not required to be eligible to win any one (1) Weekly Prize. Chances of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received. Eligible winners must correctly answer skill-testing question. Prize draws will be held at 16 Mary Street, Unit 4, Aurora, Ontario at approximately 2:00pm (ET) on April 7, 2016. No purchase required. Complete rules available at www.hyundaisupersearch.com. TM/MThe Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp.

Window dressing helps protect birds

SAFETY

Tips to keep feathered pals from hitting glass panes

With a house close to the Eastern Pennsylvania woods — and the wildlife that lives there — Jeff Acopian wrestled with a problem that afflicts homeowners around the world.

"Birds were hitting our windows and dying," the Easton resident says. "And we didn't like it." An engineer by profession and a naturalist at heart, Acopian came up with a solution: Acopian BirdSavers, a fixture that involves dangling pieces of parachute cord in front of windows to keep birds from flying into them.

"It sounds pretty bad when you tell someone to hang strings on their front window," says Acopian, who nixed his original remedy, hanging strings of beads, because it made his house look like "a hippie pad."

"But when people actually see it, it is not objectionable at all," he says.

BirdSavers (at birdsavers.com) is one of a growing number of options available for folks who want to keep birds from crashing into their windows but don't want to hurt their home's curb appeal in the process.

Christine Sheppard, who runs the bird collisions campaign for the American Bird Conservancy, cites a range of relatively simple ready-made products — BirdSavers, window tape and external screens among them — as well as DIY fixes like washable window paint or hanging branches in front of windows.

These solutions are effective enough while also being subtle.

"You can reduce collisions without making your house ridiculous," Sheppard says.

ONE BILLION BIRDS AT RISK
Conservationists say the number of birds killed by collisions and cats will soon rise to 1 billion per year.

While bird collisions are hardly new, she says, the magnitude of the problem is increasing, largely due to more widespread urbanization and a trend toward larger panes of glass in both residential and high-rise construction.

Birds are either fooled by the transparency of the glass, or believe the reflections they see in them — trees, shrubs and the like — are real, and die trying to reach them, she says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A window fixture uses parachute cord to deter birds from flying into the trees and bushes they see reflected in the glass. ACOPIAN BIRDSAVERS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VISUAL BARRIERS DO THE TRICK

Window collisions kill hundreds of millions of birds each year, making them, with cats, one of the two leading human-related causes of bird mortality.

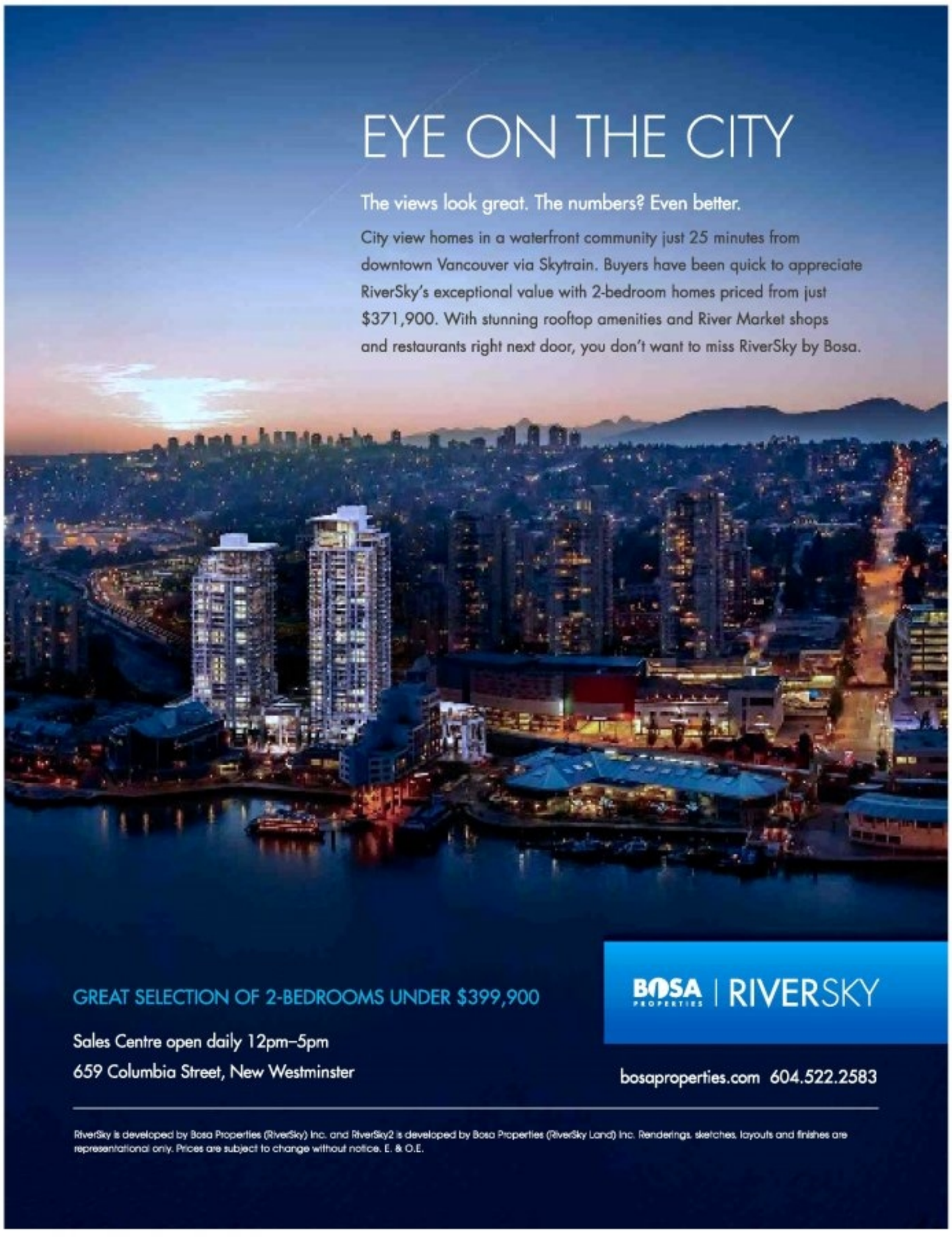
Joanna Eckles, the National Audubon Society's bird-friendly communities manager, says individuals can easily reduce those numbers simply by putting some visual barrier on the exterior of the windows that birds are drawn to.

"The big thing that people need to get is that this isn't something that has to happen," she says. "This is preventable."

That prevention, she says, could take a range of shapes.

The American Bird Conservancy's Bird Tape, available at abcbirdtape.org, is translucent and can be used to design patterns on windows. Bird screen, available at birdscreen.com, creates a barrier between birds and windowpanes. CollidEscape, available at collidescape.org, is a film that you put on outside windowpanes to reduce reflection.

The options are infinite for do-it-yourselfers, Eckles says. With washable paint, you can use stencils or let the kids create holiday decorations. Hanging virtually anything easy on the eyes — ribbons, delicate branches, strings — in front of windows will do the trick. So will the unobtrusive netting that's used to protect fruit trees.



Super kitchens bring it all together

TRENDS

New era kitchen includes work and relax space

American kitchens have always served as more than cooking and eating spaces. Generations of kids have done homework at kitchen tables. Parents claim counter space to organize family miscellany, tap out work emails on laptops or install a television.

But now those work and entertainment uses are part of kitchen design from the get-go.

The era of the "super kitchen" has arrived.

"Our findings show that homeowners expect kitchen renovations to go far beyond improving flow, storage or esthetics," said Nino Sitchinava, principal economist at Houzz.com, in announcing the site's 2016 Kitchen Trends Survey.

"The 'super kitchen' has literally become a living room, family room and office, with finishes, layouts and decor that challenge us to define where the kitchen ends and the rest of the home begins."

Interior designer Mikel Welch calls the kitchen "the new epicenter of the house."

"Everybody's working from home," and they often prefer doing that in an open kitchen rather than a sequestered home office.

A built-in desk is designed to match the rest of the kitchen. HOME DEPOT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WORKIN' IT
Many kitchens now have desks or computer workstations. Non-kitchen items are stored in "built-ins that match the rest of the kitchen."

Features of a true "super kitchen"

• **High-tech stations** Designer Tiffany Brooks, host of HGTV's Most Embarrassing Rooms in America, says homeowners want technology within easy reach, but protected from food and drink spills. Some add a built-in iPad docking area or laptop station on a counter, while others choose the less expensive option of adding a tablet dock mounted under a cabinet, with an arm that swings out.

People also want power. Pop-up outlets are being installed directly into countertops, says Sarah Fishburne, director of trend and design for the Home Depot. Wireless "charging countertops" are also available, including LG's Tech Top and Dupont Corian. And homeowners are adding extra power outlets throughout the kitchen, and designing dedicated charging areas with power strips.

Another tech choice: Dishwashers that run almost silently, so they won't distract you while you're working in the kitchen. And full-size televisions are being added to the main cooking area so you can do your binge-watching in the same place where you try to avoid binge-eating..

Occasionally, new kitchen technology does involve food: "Warming drawers are huge," Brooks says.

And some people, Welch says, "want to essentially bring Starbucks to them." Restaurant-quality drink facilities are being added to home kitchens.

• **More surfaces, more seating, more storage** "An emerging trend is two islands being incorporated into a kitchen, if there is space," says Fishburne.

Several of Welch's design clients have requested oversize countertops that "allow six to eight people to comfortably sit with barstools," he says.

Lounging-friendly seating is a priority. If a kitchen doesn't have space for a sectional sofa or other large seating, some homeowners are knocking down walls to merge the kitchen with other rooms.

Kitchen storage, too, is becoming more stylish and more organized. Closet-design systems originally conceived for bedroom closets are now being used to organize kitchen cabinets and pantries, Brooks says.

And rather than cramming work papers or family files into a cabinet designed for dishes, designers are building office and crafts storage into the kitchen.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Pizza ovens: Hot in the house or outside

NEW TREND

Will consumers pay big bucks to make their pies at home?

Above: The Artisan Fire Pizza Oven by Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet reaches 800 F and can cook a Neapolitan-style pizza in fewer than three minutes. Inset: The Lynx Grills Napoli Pizza Oven can make pizza, calzone, pot roast, bread and fajitas THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pizza Hut is fine when you feel like going out. But with pizza ovens designed for the kitchen or backyard, you can have that restaurant taste at home.

This spring, one of the most recognizable names in home appliances will go after a piece of that pie when GE Monogram starts selling a $10,000 electric, residential wall model designed to fit into the space of a standard 30-inch wall oven.

"We saw a considerable market gap when it came to the available at-home options for pizza enthusiasts and home chefs," said Wayne Davis, commercial leader at FirstBuild, a subsidiary of GE Appliances.

GE fired up its oven and cooked pizza in the middle of the Las Vegas Convention Center at this year's recent Kitchen and Bath Industry Show.

There's also a propane-powered, outdoor, countertop Napoli Pizza Oven from Lynx Grills.

Like others, the Napoli has a stainless exterior, a pizza stone, and a stone-like interior designed to reflect heat like a brick oven. It requires about 30 minutes or so to heat to an internal temperature of 700 degrees or more.

After that, a Neapolitan-style pizza should cook in a matter of minutes, but the ovens also can be adjusted to cook other styles of pizza and calzone.

In addition to the $4,000 countertop model, the Napoli also comes paired with a freestanding cart at $6,500 for the set. Another company, Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet, has a $6,900 outdoor countertop model called the Artisan Fire Pizza Oven that can be packed up for a tail-gate party.

"It comes in three layers. Each layer can be easily unstacked and moved by one person," said company spokesman Bradley Carlson.

"It's not only about the grill anymore," he said.

"People are becoming more sophisticated in terms of what they're cooking outdoors."

Last year, the company unveiled a version of the Artisan Fire Pizza Oven that can be built into brick, stone or concrete for a clean look in an outdoor kitchen. It costs $8,300, plus installation.

At the kitchen show, Kalamazoo debuted an $11,000 "rolling pizza station" that holds the Artisan Fire oven and features built-in bins for storing toppings.

Kalamazoo's Artisan Fire differs in both form and function from the Lynx Napoli, so consumers should do their homework and investigate the scores of pizza-oven options available today from specialty shops and hardware stores.

Will homeowners really spend thousands of dollars on pizza ovens?

Hard to predict. On any given day, 13 per cent of the U.S. population age 2 and older eats pizza, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

And the number of people making pizza at home using store-bought dough accounted for nearly 10 per cent of pizza sales in 2015, up from 3 per cent in 2013, according to Consumer Reports.

While most of that was likely not baked in a fancy pizza oven, the good news for homeowners is that should they tire of pizza, the manufacturers say the outdoor ovens can also be used for roasting foods, baking breads or making fajitas.

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Put some spring in your design step

RENEWAL

Pastels, hot pink and bright white trending

For some people, spring cleaning entails not much more than a good shake of the carpets. For others, it's an excuse to update their decor.

Here's a sampling of this season's new palettes, patterns and styles:

Colours

Neither boring nor drab, new neutrals are about bringing home a sense of calm and comfort. Some pastels are chalkier, like sorbet that's been given a whisk of cream. Then there are the organic hues of earth, sky and water.

We see neutrals most often in minimalist decor, like an unglazed, branch-shaped pitcher at CB2 the colour of a stormy sea, or Ikea's trim Mostorp media unit in a soft, rosy hue. Even Le Creuset is offering its signature cast ironware in pale pink and lemon.

Los Angeles designer Joy Cho's new collection at Target is filled with fun, frothy pieces like an acrylic side table covered in polka dots, animal figurines in little party hats, and printed throw pillows and wall art saying, "You're okay." Warm neutrals — peach, blush, putty, mint and charcoal — contribute to the airy, feel-good vibe.

West Elm has partnered with Roar + Rabbit design studio on a home collection that includes a sexy, midcentury-modern swivel chair dressed in shades called lichen, nickel or dusky blush velvet.

The energy shifts with several bold hues that ride the current retro wave. Turquoise, acid yellow, emerald, pink and red are showing up, mostly in accessories and textiles.

Kirstin Hoffman, merchandising director for online decor retailer Dot & Bo, says hot pinks are trending: "Whether they're incorporated in an accent chair or a planter, the look instantly adds energy to a room."

A range of new baking items and dish towels at Crate & Barrel come in a yellow as cheery as a sunny-side-up egg.

And you'll be seeing lots of lush, green, tropical motifs for spring and summer. Beautiful blues — sapphire, navy and a variety of turquoises, teals and pale blues — are strong players on the spring palette. Wisteria has a settee in a rich jewel tone, while Ikea's got new loveseat covers in deep and delicate blues. Boston Interiors' Conrad chair is upholstered in a watercolour-blue abstract, while Farrow & Ball has added some lush hues, including Vardo, a teal, and Inchyra Blue, a dramatic blue-grey.

White — which Benjamin Moore named colour of the year — is also trending. The timing's perfect, says Kimberly Winthrop of Laurel & Wolf: "Bright white is spring cleaning in its truest sense. There'll be a lot of focus this year on incorporating whites with natural elements and textures into one's space."

Consider painting an existing piece of furniture, bringing in side tables or lighting, or changing window coverings to white.

On the surface

Surfaces are the focus in distressed rugs, textured throw pillows, and relief-patterned and pin-tucked textiles and wall coverings.

Printed, dyed velvets with flora or fauna-inspired patterns are luxe and painterly; Kevin O'Brien and Beacon Hill have collections.

Some furniture designs play with layers and lines. West Elm has a mirror named Tree Ring that fuses mirrored glass with a slice of Vietnamese hardwood. An Indian pouf at the retailer is crafted from chunks of jute and cotton like a 3-D rag rug. Cork has popped up in lots of new decor. Accessories in particular lend themselves to the sustainable material's pleasant feel, but it's in furniture now, too.

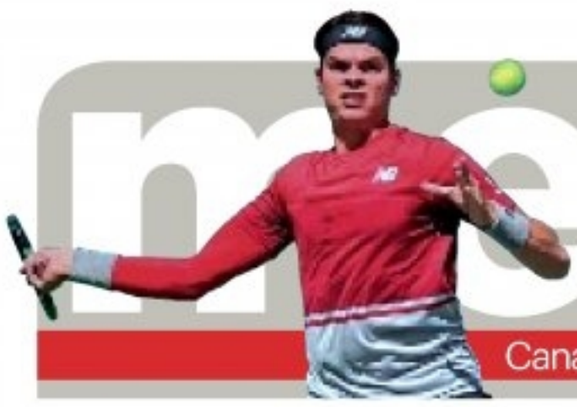
Ikea's new Sinnerlig collection from London designer Ilse Crawford includes stools and benches with cork seats, as well as coffee and dining tables. Cork lampshades at AllModern and Luxe Decor throw a warm light. And check out 1stDibs, Chairish and eBay for '70s-era vintage cork table lamps.

Metallics aren't going away, says Chicago interior designer Mikel Welch. But warmer versions are overtaking the chillier chromes and silvers.

"This spring, we'll begin to see a twist added," he says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fun abounds in springtime collections, like Joy' Cho's latest collection for Target. HANDOUT



metro SPORTS

Canada's Milos Raonic advanced to the quarter-finals of the BNP Paribas Open with a 6-4, 7-6 win over Tomas Berdych

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Well-travelled centre hopes to help Gee-Gees to CIS triumph

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

Noel Jones is a key man for the University of Ottawa Gee-Gees. RICHARD A WHITTAKER/OTTAWA GEE-GEES

Jones scripts a perfect ending

As a student of creative writing, Noel Jones loves poetry, which is exactly how he describes the sport of basketball.

"I think it's just a beautiful sport. Just poetry in motion," said Jones. "I just love watching it, love playing it … and I've really enjoyed the challenge and being able to compete at a high level. That's really what keeps me going."

The art of basketball has taken Jones on quite the journey, from Canadian high school, to the NCAA despite no real scholarship prospects down south, and back to Canada.

Born in Montreal, Jones moved to Halifax when he was about 10 years old. He played for Halifax Grammar School and then made the Syracuse University basketball team as a walk-on during his junior year. An e-mail to Ottawa Gee-Gees head coach James Derouin precipitated Jones's move to CIS competition.

"I knew the name a little bit, but when a (six-foot-six-inch), 240-pound centre from Syracuse drops you an email … you're like, 'Hmm, I think I'll return this one,'" said Derouin.

Jones and the No. 2-ranked Gee-Gees will compete for a national championship at the CIS Final 8 this week at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. They open the tournament against the Dalhousie Tigers on Thursday. The winner advances to the semifinal round to play the winner between the Carleton Ravens and Thompson Rivers WolfPack.

Jones, 26, will have family in attendance. His parents moved out to the Vancouver area, and his sister, Nikkia, is a pre-med student at Simon Fraser University.

In 13 games with Ottawa this season, Jones has averaged 5.6 minutes per game. He's not a starter. He'll come off the bench and try to make an impact in that role, shooting almost 67 per cent from the field. With it also comes the responsibility of being the quintessential supportive teammate. It's something he learned during his time in Syracuse, when playing time was especially limited.

"How your 10, 11, 12 (players) deal with limited minutes … is key to a team's success, right? They can poison the well very quickly and he handles it like a veteran and that's important," said Derouin.

"When he does have success on the court, the guys get really, really excited. That's just the kind of guy he is."

> **I think it's just a beautiful sport. Just poetry in motion. I just love watching it, love playing it … and I've really enjoyed the challenge**
> Noel Jones, University of Ottawa

NHL

Tryamkin's debut ends with a defeat

Nikita Tryamkin made his NHL debut for the Vancouver Canucks on Wednesday. That was The Story heading into this Western Conference tilt with the Colorado Avalanche.

It was difficult to tell which was longer — the cheer Tryamkin received when he hit the Rogers Arena ice for his first shift, or his first shift, which lasted all of 12 seconds long.

Curiosity has been building. The Canucks drafted Tryamkin, a Russian defenceman and a behemoth at six-foot-eight-inches tall, in the third round two years ago. After two years in the KHL, he signed in Vancouver last week.

Tryamkin's highly anticipated debut yielded an assist on Henrik Sedin's opening goal for the Canucks, giving the 21-year-old blue liner his first NHL point.

The Canucks, with three call-ups from the AHL's Utica Comets in their lineup, lost to the Avalanche by a final score of 3-1. Of course, for his first NHL game, there were bound to be some hiccups for Tryamkin, areas of his game to improve upon as he settles in with the rebuilding Canucks for the duration of a campaign that is all about the future now.

On his second shift, Tryamkin was caught hesitating about whether he should pinch off the blue line or back up as the Avalanche began to bring the puck out of their zone, resulting in a Colorado rush and the rookie defenceman chasing the play.

The Canucks are on the road to face the Edmonton Oilers on Friday.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

WEDNESDAY
at Rogers Arena

3	1
AVALANCHE	CANUCKS

Avalanche center Andreas Martinsen tries to get a shot past Canucks goalie Ryan Miller. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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New midfielder feels Caps can pick it up

MLS

Jacobson likes Vancouver side's balanced approach

Andrew Jacobson admired the Vancouver Whitecaps from afar. Now he can help steady the club after a stumbling start to 2016.

Vancouver acquired the 30-year-old midfielder in a trade with New York City FC last week, a couple of days before the Whitecaps suffered a second straight defeat to open the Major League Soccer schedule.

Jacobson — who wasn't with his new teammates for that 2-1 loss at Sporting Kansas City — played four years with rival FC Dallas before joining New York last season. He knows what Vancouver has to offer.

"It's a well-balanced team," Jacobson said this week. "It's a possession-based team.

"If you come out to press there's a lot of speed to get in behind you. I think we can hurt people in a lot of different ways."

The opposite has been true through two games, thanks to some critical mistakes, with Vancouver losing 3-2 at home to the Montreal Impact before that setback against K.C.

Andrew Jacobson, then with New York City FC, takes the ball from Vancouver Whitecaps' Mauro Rosales in a 2015 game.
DARRYL DYCK /THE CANADIAN PRESS

Defensive lapses on the backline and naive play all over the pitch have cost the Whitecaps dearly. Matias Laba is a rock in the centre of the defensive midfield, but who lines up beside the Argentine has been a bit of a question mark.

Vancouver traded Gershon Koffie to the New England Revolution before the season, while Russell Teibert is injured. That leaves Kianz Froese and Deybi Flores, both just 19, to split starting duties.

Froese, a Canadian international, did well against Montreal and was subbed on for Flores at halftime against Sporting after the Honduran had a difficult opening 45 minutes, including a giveaway that led to K.C.'s first goal.

It's unclear whether the six-foot-two 185-pound Jacobson will play this weekend when Vancouver visits the Seattle Sounders, who also have two losses through two games. But his new teammates are eager to see what Jacobson brings.

"He's a good soccer player, he's a leader and he's maybe that missing piece we need in midfield," said Whitecaps goalkeeper David Ousted. "Having that calming presence is hopefully going to help us."

Vancouver head coach Carl Robinson likes to make it clear he doesn't want to put up barriers to impede the progress of his younger players. He stressed Jacobson's addition shouldn't be viewed in that light when it comes to Froese and Flores.

"They've got to earn that right to be in the team," said Robinson, who sent targeted allocation money the other way in the deal with New York. "Experience like (Jacobson) brings will help these guys.

"He's calm, he's confident ... he'll bring a lot to the table for us."

A soft-spoken native of Palo Alto, Calif., with 174 MLS appearances under his belt, Jacobson was eager to return to the West Coast before the trade and is happy he wound up in Vancouver.

"(The Whitecaps) have a great reputation amongst players inside the league," he said. "The coach has a great reputation.

"It's a place players want to be." THE CANADIAN PRESS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE ROUNDUP

Bayern wins thriller as Barca marches on

Thomas Mueller equalized in the first minute of injury time and Bayern Munich scored two more goals in extra time to complete a thrilling 4-2 victory over Juventus on Wednesday that sent the German powerhouse into the Champions League quarter-finals.

Thiago Alcantara scored in the 108th minute to put Bayern ahead for good in the second-leg match of the last 16 and Kingsley Coman, on loan from Juventus, added the hosts' fourth goal just two minutes later to seal a 6-4 victory on aggregate. Bayern trailed 2-0 after goals from Juve's Paul Pogba and Juan Cuadrado. The home side looked to be out until Robert Lewandowski scored in the 73rd and Mueller's late header changed everything.

In the other match Wednesday, Barcelona's beat Arsenal 3-1 (5-1 on agg.), sending the defending champions into the quarterfinals for a ninth consecutive season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Hutch just OK for Jays
Drew Hutchison's bid to nail down the fifth starter's spot in the Blue Jays rotation goes on after he failed to fully convince in a 2-1 loss to the New York Yankees Wednesday night.

Hutchison looked sharp early on, striking out three. He left the game having allowed two runs and four hits in 4-2/3 innings of work.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hamilton boys together
Four years after wearing the red Maple Leaf together at the Saddledome, the brothers Hamilton have been reunited by the flaming 'C'.

The Calgary Flames called up Dougie Hamilton's older brother, Freddie, on Wednesday from their American Hockey League affiliate in Stockton, Calif.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

New Kiwi to take charge
Rugby Canada is reportedly tabbing another New Zealander to coach the men's national team.

The New Zealand Herald says Mark Anscombe has been offered the job. Anscombe previously coached Ulster in the Guinness Pro 12, Auckland in the ITM Cup and the New Zealand under-20 side that won the 2011 IRB Junior World Championship.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

LeBron told to take a rest
Cavaliers star LeBron James sat out Wednesday's 99-98 win over Dallas, part of the team's plan to rest him before the playoffs.

Coach Tyronn Lue announced the decision not to play James about 90 minutes before tipoff against the Mavericks.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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RECIPE Shrimp and Vegetable Spaghetti

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

This dish is chock full of vegetables and herbs but, more importantly, it yields lots of leftovers.

Ready in
Prep time: 20 minutes
Total time: 50 minutes
Serves 8 to 10

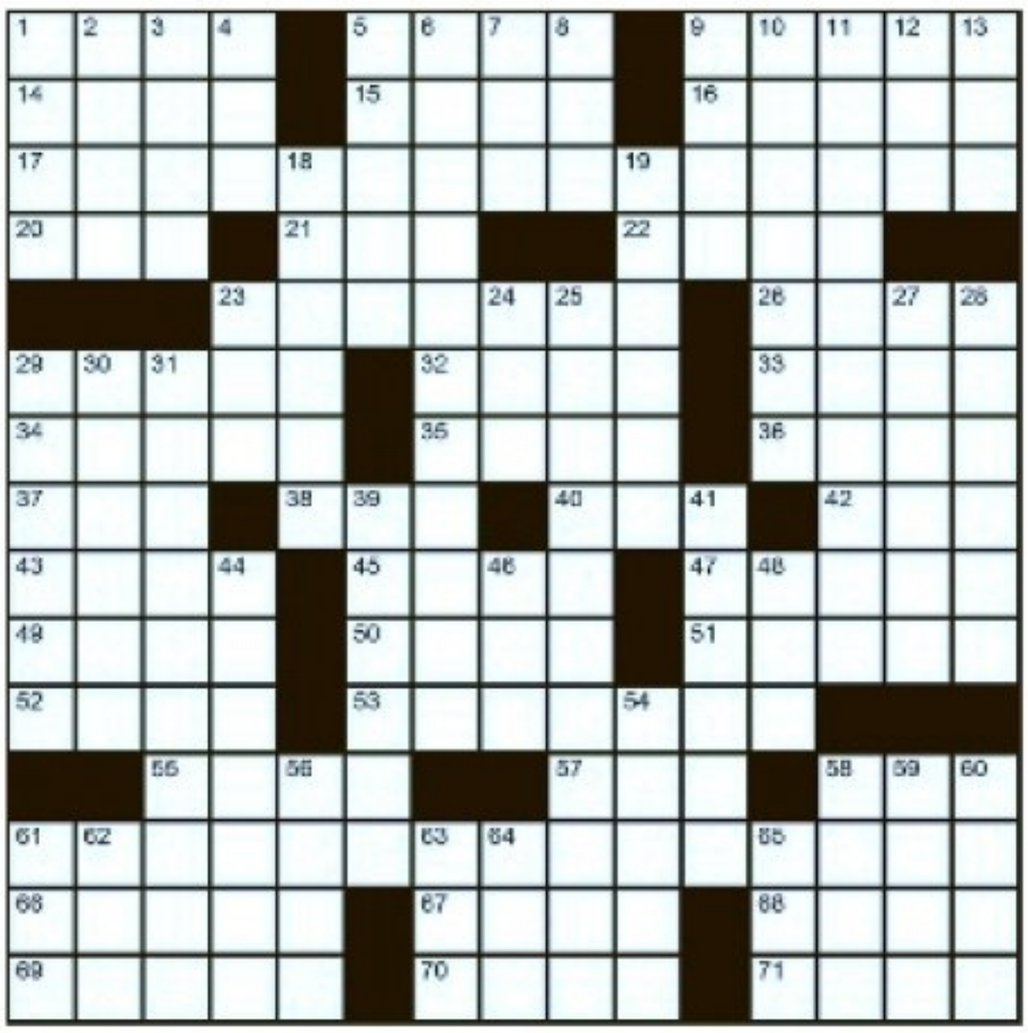
Ingredients
- 1 yellow zucchini, sliced in half lengthwise
- 2 portobello mushrooms, stems removed, caps scooped and halved and then cut crosswise into slices
- 1 red pepper, sliced into quarters
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh chopped oregano
- 1 Tbsp fresh chopped rosemary
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 lb thawed peeled deveined shrimp
- 1 box of spaghetti
- 2 large meaty tomatoes, sliced into chunks
- 1 container marinated artichoke hearts, plus a drizzle of its oil
- 1 cup feta cheese, plus some of its water
- 1 handful fresh chopped basil

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Toss the zucchini, mushrooms and red pepper with 2 Tbsp of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, 2 cloves of garlic, oregano and rosemary to coat.
3. Place vegetables on greased pan and roast in the oven; turn vegetables once and cook until tender, about 30 minutes.
4. Remove to platter and allow to cool slightly so you can handle them to slice. Slice the vegetables into bite size pieces.
5. In a large skillet over medium heat, add butter and two cloves of garlic and cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the shrimp and cook until they are pink, about 5 minutes. Remove the shrimp and juices from the pan and set aside.
6. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan of salted boiling water, cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and place the pasta in a large mixing bowl.
7. Drizzle the rest of the olive oil into the pasta. Toss the vegetables, as well as the shrimp and their buttery juices into the spaghetti and serve with feta and basil.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Irish _ of Tara (Arms of Canada symbol)
5. Performs pluses
9. Uncle on "Full House"
14. Give _ _ (Theatrically prompt)
15. Actress Jessica
16. Currency exchange fees
17. Irish playwright Samuel Beckett's famous production: 3 wds.
20. Canadian ID
21. Ms. Ryan
22. Art Deco designer
23. Chesterfield components
26. Chemical suffixes
29. Zep's "Whole _ Love"
32. Not masc./ Not fem.
33. Trigonometry ratio
34. Shreddies-eater's need: 2 wds.
35. Reaper's adage, "_ _ sow, so shall..."
36. Ernest G. Bilko's rank [abbr.]
37. Rock logo insurance co.
38. Residue variety
40. LPs replacers
42. Big song
43. Knight titles
45. Fizzy beverage
47. "Me, Myself & _" (2000)
49. Architect Mr. Saarinen
50. Banned orchard spray
51. Tightwad
52. Trim
53. Sculpture like the real one
55. Ms. de Matteo
57. Roxy Music's Brian
58. Diving bird
61. Dublin's plays place, founded in 1904: 3 wds.
66. Sir William Cornelius Van _ (Canadian Pacific Railway bigwig in the 1800s)
67. Ghost's cry!
68. Stockings
69. Question-answering options, _ _ No
70. "Michelle ma belle / _ les mots..." - The Beatles
71. Traverse

DOWN
1. Hems and _ (Hesitates)
2. Amazon Rainforest berry
3. Destroy
4. 15th Prime Minister's monogram
5. Daisy Mae's beloved
6. Song by Cdn. rock group Big Sugar: 3 wds.
7. Word's li'l meaning
8. _-mo replay
9. Florida Panthers player Jaromir
10. Me Me ...and more Me
11. Fries and coleslaw: 2 wds.
12. Sault Ste. Marie's nickname, The _
13. East: French
18. Antelope of Africa
19. Caught one's breath
23. Queen _ _. (Toronto thoroughfare)
24. Super _ (Old video game console by Nintendo, commonly)
25. Governor of Quebec, Sir _ _ aka Lord Dorchester (b.1724 - d.1808)
27. Fire truck
28. Irish _ (Sporting dog)
29. Expires
30. Comedian Conan
31. Lists of backstage demands in the world of rock: 2 wds.
39. Divine beetle in ancient Egypt
41. Big lake in Ontario
44. Maria Callas' voice
46. _ of luxury
48. River inlet
54. _ _ water (Up the proverbial creek)
56. Celebrity hairstylist Jose
58. Above
59. Constellation, _ Major
60. Really interested
61. Bible's 'your'
62. Gardening tool
63. Egg-shaped-packaging beauty brand
64. "_-hoo!"
65. Sneeze starters...

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Don't get emotional over things you can't control. The state of the world may at times upset you but there is only so much you can do on your own. Use the talents you were born with to help those less fortunate.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
If you have to disappoint a friend then so be it — there's no point tying yourself in knots because you don't want to hurt their feelings. Sometimes you have to speak the truth.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
There have been storm clouds in your life of late but the outlook is improving and in a week there will be plenty of sunshine in your life. On the work front, don't be confrontational.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You are under fortunate stars but your negative attitude is making things look worse than they are. A difficult situation will work itself out, so don't give in to doom and gloom.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
What is amusing to you may not be funny to everyone else, so don't laugh too loud or too long or you could offend people. Not everyone is as laid-back as you Leo.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you must point out where others are going wrong at least do so with tact. If you come across as rude and uncaring you will lose the support of colleagues who could have and should have been friends.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
There have been major changes in your life but soon you'll understand why they had to happen and how they'll benefit you. Find reasons to smile — then have a wild weekend!

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Travel and social plans may get delayed today but there's no point getting annoyed. If someone lets you down just accept it — it's hardly the end of the world.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Don't be discouraged if what you've been working on these past few weeks does not seem to be making much progress. Keep plugging away and you'll get the breakthrough your efforts deserve.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It may be wise not to make your plans public until you're 100 per cent sure you're going to go through with them. The more people who know about them, the more unnecessary pressure you will put on yourself.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may have a lot of tedious tasks to take care of but they won't feel like such a chore if you share the load. Call in a few favours.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
If the route you were planning to take is blocked don't get angry about it — most likely it is the universe's way of telling you that you should be taking a different path. Few things in life happen without a reason.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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9	1	8	3	6	5	4	2	7
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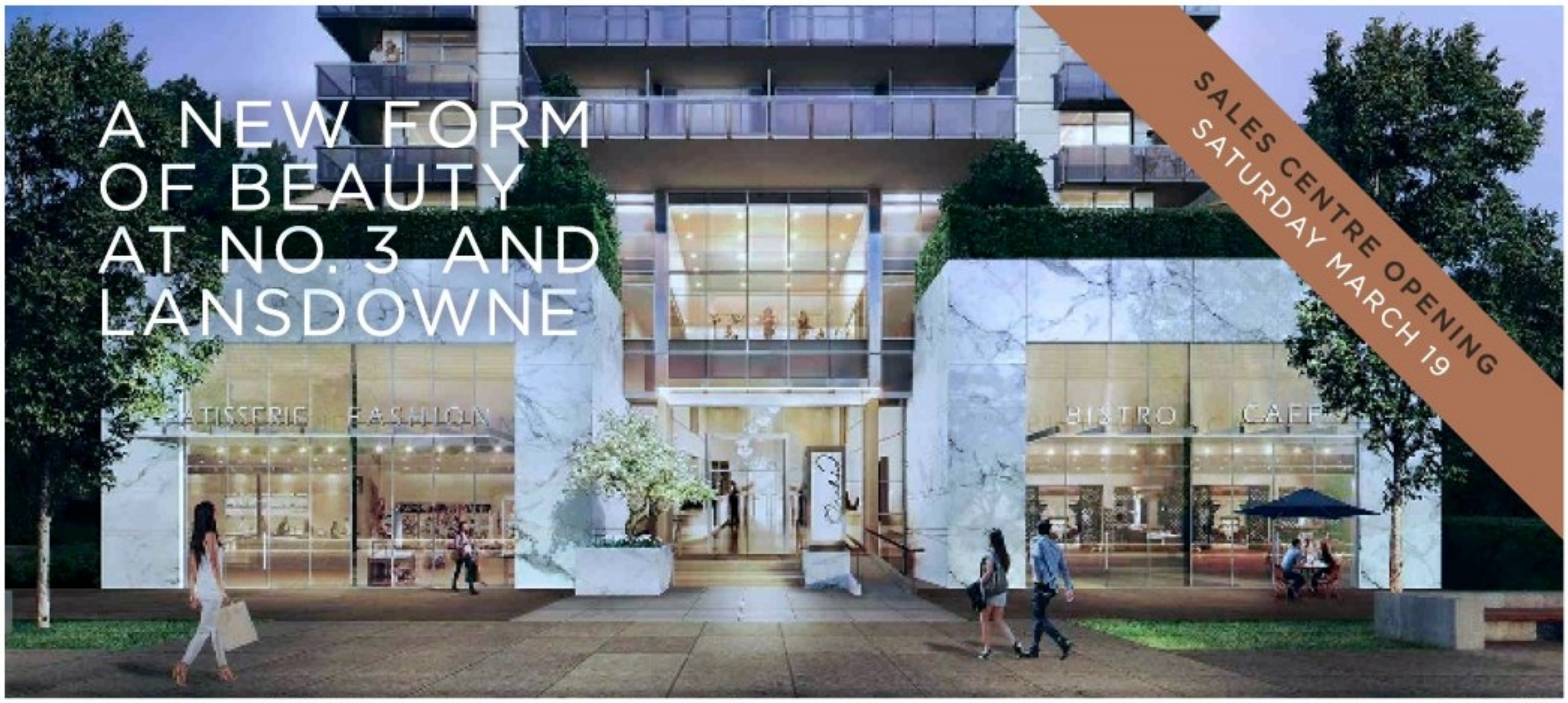

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